



**T**he Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta is a regional, state, and national treasure. It is a unique and valuable estuary, the hub of the state's water supply system, and important to recreation and tourism. The Delta supplies water to 25 million people and irrigates more than 7 million acres of the most productive agricultural land in the nation. It also supports community, transportation, energy, communications, and infrastructure.

**The Delta is in serious crisis. Under current management practices, the Delta as it exists today is unsustainable.** It is threatened by the effects of floods, earthquakes, sea-level rise, climate change, invasive species, and increased urbanization. Its ability to supply enough drinking and irrigation water is competing with the needs of the native species that rely on its habitat.

Under Governor Schwarzenegger's leadership, the Department of Water Resources and other state agencies are working on many projects and initiatives toward a more sustainable Delta.

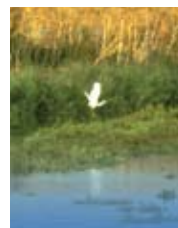


## DELTA INITIATIVES:



### DELTA VISION

Governor Schwarzenegger's Delta Vision Blue Ribbon Task Force has recommended a vision and near-term actions to protect the Delta ecosystem and the state's water supply. The Task Force recommends a significant increase in conservation and water system efficiency, including new facilities to move and store water, enhanced disaster planning, and immediate improvements to protect the environment and the system that moves water through the Delta.

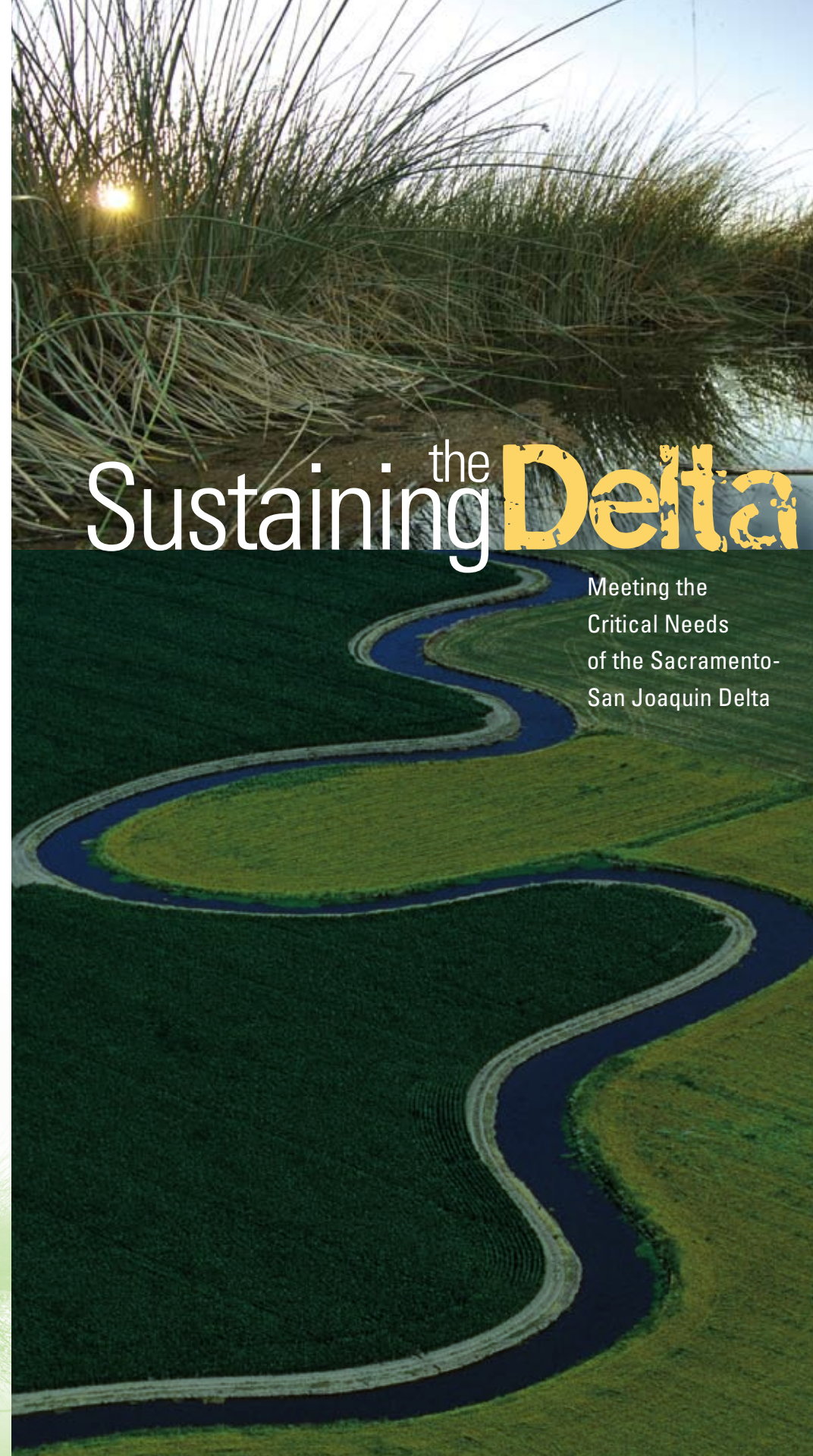


### THE BAY DELTA CONSERVATION PLAN

A group of water agencies, fishery agencies and environmental organizations are preparing a comprehensive conservation plan under the federal Endangered Species Act and the California Natural Communities Conservation Planning Act. It is focused on restoring the health and sustainability of the Delta ecosystem and improving water supply reliability.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES  
[WWW.WATER.CA.GOV](http://WWW.WATER.CA.GOV)

March 2008



# Sustaining<sup>the</sup> Delta

Meeting the  
Critical Needs  
of the Sacramento-  
San Joaquin Delta



*These are areas  
of critical importance  
for Delta sustainability.*



## WATER CONSERVATION

Conservation is the most cost-effective and environmentally sound way to reduce water demand. Investments provided by Proposition 84, along with the existing Integrated Regional Water Management programs, are resulting in regional strategies for water resources management that better protect communities from drought, improve water quality and maintain local water security. These efforts and other actions to further reduce dependence on imported water, including water from the Delta, are vital to ensure Californians have adequate water supplies now and in the future.

## WATER QUALITY

The Delta's water quality and salinity levels must support both native species and urban and agricultural use. Upstream diversions, agricultural drainage, wastewater discharges, rising sea level, and changes in river flows all affect the quality of the Delta's water. Organic carbon in the Delta and bromide ions from sea level rise may require enhanced water treatment to protect public health. A combination of additional storage and alternative Delta conveyance will allow greater control of water releases that will improve drinking water quality.



## EMERGENCY RESPONSE

A comprehensive emergency response plan is critical to the sustainability of the Delta. The state's fiscal year 2007 budget included \$12 million for early implementation of the Delta Emergency Response plan, and an additional \$60 million is proposed for fiscal year 2008. These funds are being used to stockpile flood fighting supplies and to support other actions to improve emergency response.

## ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

In July 2007, Governor Schwarzenegger ordered a series of immediate actions to protect the Delta, including projects to restore habitat, reduce land subsidence and carbon emissions, prevent the spread of invasive species, and studies to protect smelt. While long-term solutions for Delta sustainability are being developed through the Bay-Delta Conservation Plan, additional interim projects will include restoring additional Delta wetlands and fish spawning areas, evaluating a low-flow screen project at the State Water Project Delta facilities, additional funding for land subsidence and carbon sequestration studies, and a restoration project on Franks Tract in the North Delta.

## WATER STORAGE

Climate change and California's growing population are stressing the state's water supply. Surface and groundwater storage are important tools needed to capture runoff for future water supply, provide flexibility for flood management and help maintain Delta water quality and fish habitats through timed releases. Governor Schwarzenegger has proposed additional storage to help adapt to the effects of climate change and population growth. Added storage will provide additional flexibility in the timing of pumping from the Delta, thus protecting at-risk fish species.



## FLOOD PROTECTION

Many Delta levees were constructed more than 100 years ago on unstable peat soils. Studies indicate a two in three chance of a major earthquake occurring in or near the Delta in the next 50 years. Multiple levee breaks and liquefaction of levee structures could have an immediate impact to water supply, destruction of major infrastructure, and degradation of water quality that could last up to two years. Propositions 1E and 84 are providing vital funding for levee repairs and flood control projects throughout the Central Valley and the Delta.

## CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is already affecting California's water supply. The Sierra snowpack, which is vital to annual water supply, is projected to shrink at least 25 percent in the next 50 years. Unpredictable runoff, rising sea levels, and less fresh water flowing out of the Delta in spring and summer, will allow more salt water to intrude into the Delta. Rising water temperatures and changes in flow may also affect various fish species, including salmon.

## CONVEYANCE ALTERNATIVES

There is a growing consensus that existing Delta water conveyance is unreliable and is not conducive to the long-term health of the estuary. Working through the Bay Delta Conservation Plan process, DWR and the participating organizations will study alternatives to current Delta water conveyance to provide for the conservation of at-risk fish species, provide for ecosystem sustainability, improve water supply reliability, and reduce risk to water infrastructure.

